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LETTER writ by *Segdirboeg*,

In Answer to Five

Written by Mr. *Samuel Webber*, *1829.C*

Upon the Decay of the

**Woollen Manufactories**  
**In Great Britain and Ireland :**

Also to his Scheme to prevent

That Iniquitous **T R A F F I C K** for the  
future, by an *Universal Registry*.

Dedicated to the Lord-Mayor, Court of Alder-  
men, and Common-Council of L O N D O N.

Wherein is Discovered

The Design and Ambitious Views of the  
said *Webber* and his Accomplices ; as appears  
by his eager Solicitations for a **C H A R T E R**,  
more than for the *National Interest*.

To which is prefix'd,

An Abstract of the New Act made against  
the Illicite Exportation of *Wool* ; and a short  
and familiar *Scheme* of less Trouble, and more  
Gain and Safety for the *King* and *Nations*  
Good, without a *Charter*. Also *Segdirboeg's*  
Challenge.

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— *Clavis Voluit Duplex.*

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# Segdirboeg's LETTER,

In Answer to Five

Wrote by Mr. *Samuel Webber.*

S I R,

I Have read, in the *Weekly Miscellany* of November 1739, your Observations on *Wool* and *Woollen Tarn*, from the Peace of *Ryswick*, to this Time ; and of the flourishing of our Staple Trade, while *Great Britain* and *Ireland* kept their Wool from *France*, and other Foreign Parts : Thus far our Opinions agree ; but however formidable the Antagonist Author seems to carry on his Designs, I undertake to confront his Artifice of Monopolizing a *Charter* to aggrandize a designing Party ; no Man whose Eyes are open, but may see into the Bottom of this Scheme ; who, under Pretence of a National Good, would prove Tyranny, Oppression and Avarice : It was the Advice of a great Man, *to answer a Fool according to his Folly, lest he should be wise in his own Conceit.* This is my Reason, which, upon a just Foundation, I take the Freedom of offering my Sentiments. In the first place, in his Dedication to the Lord-Mayor,

Court of Aldermen, and Common-Council of the City of *London*, he introduces himself for their Patronage ; I ask for what ? Is it to usher in a parcel of Ribaldry and Nonsense, a Scheme all of a heap, and as much confused as its Author ; there is nothing in it, that I can see, can be supported with Credit or Advantage to the Kingdom, but full of Self-Contradiction ; for, saith he, in these Words, *An effectual Remedy for this fatal Evil, which has been often studied, but never before invented* ; when immediately after he gives himself a plain Contradiction, having advanc'd the same Arguments Nine Years before, which were recommended to this City by upwards of 60,000 Traders in the Woollen Way. And now again, as a new Thing, approved of by all, without the least Exception of any ; a thing utterly false and ridiculous, which never was acceptable to any, that I ever heard of, either to a Member of Parliament, or Gentlemen in Trade, except (I say) to his own Accomplices, who longs to be made great Men by this unthought-of Charter.

The next Thing he produces, is an old talk'd-of Story, which by virtue of his Scheme, will bring in by a Calculation of Trade, Seven Millions of Money Annually, and One Million clear Profit to his Majesty, this he introduces all New ; whereas there are several Members I could name, can prove this Thing to be old News too, for even the last Session of Parliament, it was given  
in



in by other Hands, and evidently made appear; and, I believe, as much or more to the Purpose as ever Mr. *Webber* can pretend to, with all his Adherents; therefore it's no longer a Secret, nor his General Register neither, notwithstanding he gives it forth, it can't be carried on, while in the Hands of Officers: If so, query whether he and his Accomplices would struggle so hard for a Charter as they do, or whether they would not chuse to be all Officers, or rather a sort of Officers; which Things are as absurd as ridiculous, and even a Contradiction in Nature. And so much for his Introduction.

The next Thing that comes before me, are his Five Letters in the *Weekly Miscellany*, shewing the Progress and Decay in Trade; wherein he gently wipes down the present Generation in Trade, intimating, that Knowledge subsists in Old Age, when, on the contrary, it often appears the Dotage of a whimsical Brain; this, I think, argues great Ambition, altho' hinted ever so serious; I appeal to my Readers, whether Reason, Judgment and Will are always with Men of gray Hairs, or whether we have not in Trade, Men of as good a Genius as he; and whether what he has repeated on this Topick, has not been as often spoken to by different Authors, viz. *Smith, Baxter, Pearn, Plank, Mun, Bridges*, and *Blackwelhall* Factors, &c. — So what have we new from Mr. *Webber*, but the old Story trump over and over again; I acknowledge in his Arguments

ments he agrees with most on the Decay of Trade, but his Method for Retrieving it is fabulous.

The next Observation I shall make is, the Tender-heartedness of this Gentleman ; for, says he, *if any Person would give me Wool for the working it, I would not accept it* : His Reason is, he could not get Bread by it without wronging the Poor. This, I think, sufficiently argues his weak Capacity, and slender Judgment in Trade ; I only ask, would any Man in his proper Senses refuse a Quantity of Wool, were any Body so kind as to bestow it upon him ? Yet this Gentleman, upon the Faith and Word of a Christian, would refuse it, because it is against his Nature to oppress the Poor. By his Rule then, all Persons in Trade make use of Oppression otherwise they could not live ! a fine Way of arguing, for a Patronage to give them Roast-meat by Universal Registry, but lash them with the Spit, by Charter ! But the Million of Monies, with Seven more added to it, will set the Inspection above the Possibility of Frauds, which Officers, he says, might be tempted to : But what say his Opposites to the Monopolizing a Charter, to such tender Consciences, which would harass the Subjects to ingross Gain to a particular Sett of Men : Commissioners must be sworn, and what are they then, I pray you ? Are they not Officers, after being sworn, I say ? Officers still, and under his Majesty too. I would observe, in



Page the 25th, how he compliments his supposed Brother-Officers on the Laws in being, as not sufficient to prevent the Running of Wool; his Arguments are as follows, *viz.* "Religion and Trade both dwindle and die away together; for, saith he, when Conscience had its proper Influence, and Men had a Sense of their Duty, they would not make free with Oaths, to sell their King and Country, for their own private Advantage." — And again, "The Cement of Society being dissolved, the Barrier of Publick Good being destroy'd, Personal Interest takes place of the National, and the most sacred Obligations give way to avaritious and ambitious Views: It's worth *France's* while to give large Premiums to bribe Officers, and in such corrupted Times, Officers will not have Honesty enough to refuse them, as appears too evidently from Experience." *This is evidently a Snow-ball aim'd at the Ministry.*

I believe, upon the Whole, 'tis very notorious that Mr. *Webber* only wants to establish this design'd Charter to enrich himself and the rest of his Accomplices: But, it's my Opinion, he never will; I argue from the foregoing Paragraph, that if Mr. *Webber* and his Adherents could prove such Facts, the Law is open, and Help at Hand; Publick Offences deserve Publick Punishments; they say, they know it by Experience: If so, and they be such Friends to their King and Country, as they pretend to, certainly they would  
do

do Justice to Saddle the right Horse, and to acquit themselves like Men: If not so, they assert what they cannot make good, and deserve an Huzzah accordingly.

But this cannot bear weight with me, for every thinking Person will grant, that where restless Men are disappointed in their Ends, as I imagine, Mr. *Webber* and his Accomplices will be, in attempting to obtain their design'd Charter; they borrow Language from the *Craftsman* and *Common-Sense*, to bespatter themselves, rather than the Government; but yet that Officer aim'd at, stands faithfully against Hatred and Malice, notwithstanding the Arrows of his Enemies.

The next Thing he vindicates and applauds, is his effectual Registry, which in the Shape he gives it in, is impracticable; put the best Constructions upon the Registry, all it can do for us, is, but to discover the Yearly Increase and Decrease of all the Wool in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and that others have said before him, and therefore not effectual.

His next Topick, the grand Scheme, consisting of 17 Paragraphs, which comes under my Attention; and to be concise, I shall bring them under one little general Head, and for the Satisfaction of the Publick, to prevent their  
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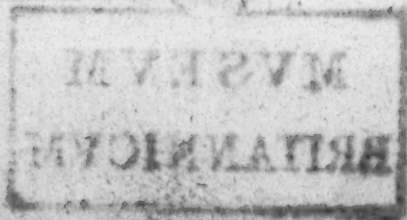


being imposed on for the future ; altho' really it's not worth my Notice.

He begins thus, " That the Parish-Clerk, Tything-man, or Overseer of the Poor, as shall be thought proper by Parliament, be appointed Keeper of the Register of each respective Parish, &c. &c." This kind Usage of Mr. *Webber's* must needs be thought very valuable, to take the Power out of the Hands of those well recommended to the Commissioners and Government, whose Sallaries, as Officers together, are bound with an Oath, must be allow'd to all Christian Men, a Confirmation of Truth, and a Decision of Controversy ; an Oath in Law or Equity, must, *prima facio*, be admitted as Truth : Who is the Man then that dares dispute its Veracity ? I appeal to Mr. *Webber* and all his Confederates, whether they would take it kind in any Person to suspect the Veracity of their Oaths under their intended Charter ? Yet how cruelly he charges Officers of Perjury, without Proof of Fact, Time, or Place, (four Grapes.) But to return to our Tything-men, or Parish-Clerks in the West of *England, Wales, Ireland* and *Scotland*, where one Church serves two or three Parishes, and one Minister and Parish-Clerk only, supply the said Parishes, by Turns, and perhaps one or two Hundred Growers of Wool in the same, and they for the most part remote, and at a vast Distance from each other : I ask then,

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Can this Parish-Clerk or Tything-man be with All in one Day? The Time of Shearing is generally in *June*, and all the Farmers Clip or Shear in a Fortnight or Three Weeks; where then shall we get Tything-men and Clerks to serve them All? Can they be at every Growers in this short Space of Time? Besides, the Wool must be weighed; not considering that many poor Occupiers of Land, or Raisers of Lambs, &c. are capable of purchasing of Beam, Scales and Weights, &c. and if not, they must be fined and harrassed, at the Election and Mercy of the very Pest of the Earth, Tything-men, Men generally subject to all manner of Vice, Corruption and Bribery, being sottish and insolvent Miscreants, especially in them Parts above cited; do but examine History, of the former and latter Times, and they will inform you: And these be our New Sett of Officers, set apart by Mr. *Webber's* Scheme, to impose on his Majesty and his People to support his avaritious and ambitious Views in Charter-Party.

And what can be suppos'd to prevent such Proceeding in that Case, they having no Place of Profit, Interest or Sallary, to be in dread of loosing? I say, Can such be mulcted for an Offence of this Kind, when even their own Clergy, whom they act under and serve, by common Report, hath not above Ten, Twenty or Thirty Pounds *per Annum*? certainly from hence we must needs expect





expect very upright Performance from such a Sett of New Officers, in those remote Places above-cited.

I now come to examine this Tything-man's Sallary, whose Pay I find to be but Two-pence a Permit, by this Scheme: I ask Mr. *Webber*, Can it be supposed that this Tythe-man, or Proctor, can make it worth his while, without oppressing the Poor, to travel all over the Country after Wool, and the Owners of Wool, for the Value of Two-pence? Or can it be supposed that he must quit his lawful Vocation or Business, at all times for the sake of Two-pence? But suppose him to be at Church with his Minister on Week-Days, as it often happens, mean while some Body calls for a Permit, must he then quit his Church to grant it? Or in case he were performing the Ceremony for the Burial of the Dead, must he then quit the Grave to make out Permits? How ridiculous is this!

But after all these Things, Bonds must be given, and Licenses taken out, Cocquets must be passed, Entries made out; and who must do them, Tything-men? Brave Inspectors! who for a Reward, would let all the Wool in *Great Britain* and *Ireland* go to *France*, &c. If this is the Way to set the Inspection above the Possibility of Frauds, which Officers might be tempted to practice, as Mr. *Webber* says, I have done with Wool-Scheming, and give up the Cause to him and his New Invention.

But

But as a further Proof, he recommends his Tythe-man, &c. to the next Parish Justice. This again, is like the rest of his Council ; it was made appear, of a very late Date, that a certain Member, with several Country Justices of the Peace, were tainted with the like illegal Practices of Running of Wool ; and you know, Sir, what has been, may be again ; And so much for your Scheme, Sir.

## C O N C L U S I O N.

**I** Observ'd last Session of Parliament, in a little Book, which, as I remember, was called *The Smugglers Defeated*, in which was a Proposal familiar and agreeable, without Charge or Oppression, where the Farmer, Skinner, or Grower of Wool, may do what he pleased with his Sheep, Lamb, or Skin-Wool, till they want to remove it ; then, saith he, beware what you do, without a Permit ; for if you remove it by Land or Water, without first having a Permit, you forfeit All, both your Wool, your Horses, Carts and Tackle ; likewise by Water, your Ship, Vessel, Barge, Bottom or Boat, except you first take out a License ; also you are directed where to get the said Permit or License, viz. at the next Excise Office, without Fee or Reward ; and then and there you must swear on the Holy Evangelist, to the Property, Weight and Intention, your Permits signed suitable to the Length of the Journey ; this, I think, along with the Fines, Penalties and



and Forfeitures inflicted on all Receivers and Harbourers by the Sea-side, carries along with it a better Face, and less Trouble and more Safety for a National Good, which, if added together with the good Act made last Sessions to prevent the Running of Wool, will do more Good, in my Opinion, than all Mr. *Webber's* new Charter can afford us.

*P.S.* A short Scheme, which, if added to what's above written, would certainly do the Work so much desired, *viz.* That if all the Ports in *Great Britain* and *Ireland* were opened for a Free Trade, and a small Duty laid upon Woollen Manufactories imported from *Ireland* into *England*, so as to bring their Goods to Market upon a Par with the *British*; it would evidently appear then, to be the Interest of the *Irish* Nation, as well as the *English*, to keep their Wool from Foreigners, which would establish Trade intirely amongst ourselves, to the great Satisfaction of all true Lovers of their Country.

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## The CHALLENGE.

WHEREAS several Persons, Projectors of Schemes to prevent the Clandestine Exportation of Wool to Foreigners, assuming Knowledge without Experience; These are therefore

to

to acquaint all such Pretenders, that I, *Segdir-boeg*, born in the Parish of *Rub*, and now an Inhabitant of *Kroc*, forthwith doth appoint, and do hereby give publick Notice, that I intend to meet the said *Webber*, or any of his Accomplices, on the 30th Day of the Thirteenth Moon, at the Long Room, *Westminster*, to dispute the Illegallness of his Scheme before the Members of both Houses, each Party chusing his own Moderator, to decide Differences, Passion, or hot Language, that may possibly arise. *Note*, Neither Disputant to be contradicted by the other, before he has delivered his Sentence ; and in case he is guilty, the Person is to be degraded and turned down Stairs, and never more to be heard ; but whoever makes appear the best Methods, least Expence, and most Profit and Safety to the Government, is to have the Rewards allowed by Act of Parliament.

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*An ABSTRACT of the New Act of Parliament made against Exporting of Wool, Woollen and Bay Yarn out of Great-Britain and Ireland into Foreign Parts, and for taking off the Duties upon Woollen and Bay Yarn imported from Ireland to England, &c. Made in the 12th Year of the Reign of his Majesty King GEORGE II.*

**T**HAT from and after the First Day of May 1740, the Duties upon Woollen and Bay Yarn imported from *Ireland* shall cease and determine, and be no longer paid.

That the Medium of the Duties arising out of Woollen and Bay Yarn for Seven Years past be charged on the aggregate Fund, and made good to his Majesty.

Nevertheless the Duty is still to continue on Thrown Worsted, Cruel and Yarn of two or more Threads exported from *Ireland*.

That *Dublin, Waterford, Toughal, Kingsale, Cork, Draughada, New Ross, Newry, Wexford, Wicklow,*

*Wicklow, Sligoe, Limerick, Galway and Dundalk,* are the Ports opened in *Ireland* to the following Ports in *Great Britain*, viz. *Biddeford, Barnstaple, Minehead, Bridgewater, Bristol, Milford-Haven, Chester and Liverpool.*

That from and after the 25th of *December* 1739, all Ships carrying Wool or Yarn must be Registered, and be of the Built of *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, and thoroughly Man'd by the Subjects thereof. But if otherwise, such Ship or Vessel and the Goods in her, become forfeited and lost, with all her Guns, Ammunition, Tackle, Apparel and Furniture.

That Persons owning Ships, must make Oath where they were built, before they can be Registered.

That Wool slightly manufactured is prohibited, and no packing in Barrel, Box, Cask, Case, Chest, but in Leather or Canvas, and mark'd in Writing in big Letters, three Inches deep, *WOOL* or *YARN*, under Forfeiture of the same, and 3 s. *per* Pound.

That after the 25th of *December* 1739, no Wool or Yarn, &c. shall go Coast-ways, or from one Port to another, unless giving Notice to the Custom-House Officers of the Name of the Ship, and Captain's Name, and the Owners Names and Places of Abode, and where entered  
and



and to be exported to, and Bonds must be given for treble Value, and a License taken out without Cost; such Bonds cannot be discharged without a Certificate from the Officers of such Place where discharged.

That after the 25th of *December* 1739, Persons who are not Officers, making Seizures, must sue in the Attorney General's Name, or any other Officer of Excise or Salt, otherwise their Proceedings are null and void.

Officers making collusive Bargains, forfeits Two Hundred Pounds, and rendered incapable of serving his Majesty.

Owners making collusive Bargains, forfeits the Goods and treble the Value: the Informer, on Conviction, to have the whole Seizure, whether in *Great Britain* or *Ireland*.

Owners, or any other Person who inform against Officers within Three Months, to have the whole Forfeiture and Penalty of Two Hundred Pounds.

That all Actions, Suits and Informations commenced, may be entered and prosecuted in a Summary Way before two Justices of the Peace, &c. at the Election of the Informer, and the Weight of the Proof to lie upon the Owner, whether in *England*, *Scotland* or *Ireland*; and

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that

that all the Seizures, Forfeitures and Penalties by this Act, shall be to the Use of him or them who sue for the same.

*Proviso.* Persons not being Officers, shall lodge their Information with any Officer of his Majesty's Excise or Salt, all such Persons shall receive for his or her Benefit, but One Half of the said Seizure.

Offenders on Conviction, liable to pay 3s. *per* Pound Weight, and not of Ability to pay the same, must be transported for Seven Years to the Plantations in *America*, and if they return before the Expiration, shall suffer without the Benefit of the Clergy, and the Informer to be paid by the Commissioners or Cashiers of the publick Money, one Shilling for every Pound Weight.

That the Master, Mate or Mariners of any Ship, Vessel, Bottom or Boat, who shall at any time within the Space of Six Months, give notice to the Commissioners of *England, Scotland or Ireland*, of the Owners Names, or the Names of the Exporters, and also the Names of their Aiders and Assisters, and of the Ships or Vessels Names, so as they may be convicted, such Master, Mate or Mariners, shall be clearly acquitted from his Offence or Offences, and shall also receive Three Fourth Parts of the Forfeitures, and also of the Penalty, for such their Discovery.

Persons



Persons having a Deputation under the Hands and Seals of any of the Commissioners of the Customs of Excise or Salt, may act as an Officer.

Persons offering a Bribe to an Officer, forfeits the Sum of Three Hundred Pounds, whether he accepts the same or not, and can sue for the same.

Persons striking an Officer, or any Person aiding or assisting an Officer, or shall Rescue or attempt to Rescue any Wool or Yarn, &c. and shall be convicted thereof, shall suffer Transportation.

That the Act and every thing therein contained, doth extend to all the Aiders and Assisters in the Shipping of Wool and Yarn, as well as to the Receivers, Harbourers, Concealers and Carriers, as fully to all Intents and Purposes, as to the Owners

Duties upon stampd Vellum, Parchment and Paper is taken off to Ease the Act.

Insurers undertaking to carry Wool from *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, forfeits the Sum of Five Hundred Pounds to the Use of the Informer, to be recovered upon Conviction; and all Persons paying for Insurance, forfeits Five Hundred Pounds.

That if the Insured, or Insurers, inform or discover one against the other before six Months after the Offence committed; he, she, or they who first discovers, shall be clearly acquitted, and shall have the whole Forfeiture, as also the Insurance Money to be recovered in manner aforesaid.

Policies of Insurance made after the 25th of December 1739, that appear to be upon the Wool or Yarn, &c. are null and void, and nothing can be recovered by the Assured in either Case from the Insurer for Loss or Damage, or from the Premium given.

That if any Action be commenced against any Officer or other Person for what they shall do for putting the Act in Force, the Defendant is to give the Act in Evidence, and the Jury shall find for the Defendant, who shall recover Treble Costs for his Molestation, and have the like Remedy against him by Law, as in the foregoing Clauses.

**F I N I S.**





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